

# JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

Chairman

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## CHRISTIANS ELECTED TO THE DIET

A Christian pastor has been elected to membership in the national House of Representatives. So far as ACTIVITY NEWS editors were able to determine, he is the first Japanese clergyman in history ever to become a member of parliament.

This newly-elected Diet member is the Reverend Sekikazu Nishimura, of Katata Church in Shiga Prefecture, a member of the United Church of Christ. Pastor Nishimura is a graduate of the Free Methodist Seminary in Osaka, and has been in the active ministry for more than twenty years. He has been related to the Omi Brotherhood, founded years ago by Dr. Merrill Voorhies, and has been especially interested in the growth of the labor movement in this country. He was elected to office on the Socialist ticket.







Pastor Nishimura ran for the Diet in the general election three years ago, but lost. He says, "This campaign was much easier for me than the one three years ago. This time I had the full support of the labor movement, the farmers' union, and the Church." He is a staunch defender of the peace clause in the national constitution, and found wide support for his position among the voters in his area.

As he looks forward to service in the newly-constituted parliament, Mr. Nishimura is especially appreciative of the support he has received from the entire Christian movement in his district. Early in the campaign there were those who told him that a Christian minister had no business taking such an active part in politics. He replied however that precisely because he is a Christian leader he feels a strong sense of responsibility for the political life of the nation. He says, "Christianity belongs in politics." It is evident that many of the voters in Shiga Prefecture were won over to this position.

Across the nation Christians are active in both of the major political groupings. In the voting on May 22 a number of other Christian candidates also met with victory at the polls:

--Tetsu Katayama (Socialist, Kanagawa Prefecture), former prime minister, lawyer, a member of Fujimicho Church, Tokyo. This will be his ninth term in parliament.

--Komakichi Matsuoka (Socialist), a Baptist from Oi Church, Tokyo. Mr. Matsuoka has been active in the Japanese labor movement and is a member of the National Christian Council's Commission on International Affairs. This will be his sixth term as a member of the Diet.

--Tokutaro Kitamura (Liberal-Democrat, Nagasaki). Mr. Kitamura is a banker and is president of the Kyobunkwan (Christian Literature Association). He is a former minister of finance and of transportation and is an expert on economic policy. A veteran of five terms in the Diet, Kitamura also serves on the Commission on International Affairs of the National Christian Council. He belongs to Mitake Church, United Church of Christ, Tokyo.

--Motojiro Sugiyama (Socialist, Osaka) was at one time vice-speaker of the Diet. He is a graduate of Tohoku Gakuin (Christian school in Sendai), and a life-long supporter of the farmers' movement. A member of Matsuzawa Church, Tokyo, he has been associated for many years with Toyohiko Kagawa.







--Shutaro Matsuura (Liberal-Democrat, Hokkaido) is the president of a lumber company and at one time served as minister of labor. Elected seven times to parliament, Matsuura is a member of Mifuka Church, Hokkaido. He was baptized many years ago by Dr. Kagawa.

--Jotaro Kawakami (Socialist, Kobe) is a former chairman of the Socialist Party and was at one time a professor at Kwansei Gakuin in Nishinomiya. He is a member of Ginza Church, Tokyo, and has already served six terms in the House of Representatives.

--(Mrs.) Masa Nakayama (Liberal-Democrat, Osaka) is a graduate of Wesleyan University in the United States. A veteran of five terms in parliament, Mrs. Nakayama has served as chairman of the women's committee of the Liberal-Democrat Party and as associate minister of welfare. She is a United Church of Christ member.

--Shigeyoshi Matsumae (Socialist, Kumamoto) is a graduate of Tohoku Gakuin and president of Tokai College. A member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Tokyo, he has already served three terms in the Diet.

--Hakaru Hoashi (Socialist, Tokyo) returns to parliament for the fourth time. A writer by profession, he belongs to Kogan Church (independent).

--Hideichi Hojo (Socialist, Tokyo) has taken a special interest in the plight of persons repatriated to Japan from overseas since the war. Coming to parliament for the first time, he is a member of Chiyoda Church (United Church of Christ.)

--(Mrs.) Satoko Tokano (Socialist, Tochigi) is a housewife and the head of the women's committee of the Socialist Party. Returning for the seventh time to parliament, Mrs. Tokano is a United Church of Christ member.

--Seiichi Ii (Socialist, Niigata) is a lawyer, and a member of Shibata Church (United Church of Christ). He has now been elected for the fifth time to the Diet.

--Kozo Inomata (Socialist, Niigata) is a lawyer by profession and a member of the Episcopal Church. He is a veteran of five terms as a member of parliament.

--Kaneshichi Masuda (Liberal-Democrat, Nagano) is a lawyer and a veteran of four previous parliaments. He has served the government as minister of construction, of labor, and as cabinet secretary. He belongs to Mukyokai (Non-church Movement).







--Tamotsu Hasegawa (Socialist, Shizuoka) is the head of a tuberculosis sanitorium. Serving in parliament for the fifth time, he is a member of Enshu Church (United Church of Christ).

--Jiro Hoshijima (Liberal-Democrat, Okayama) served at one time as minister of commerce and industry. Kirisuto Shinbun reports that Hoshijima will enter parliament this year for the fifteenth time. He is a member of Reinanzaka Church, Tokyo (United Church of Christ).

--Hyosuke Niwa (Liberal-Democrat, Nagoya) is the president of a transportation company. Returning for the second time as a Diet member, Niwa is a graduate of Kwansei Gakuin University and a United Church of Christ member.

#### CONFERENCES ON SOCIAL WITNESS

Dr. Daisuke Kitagawa of the World Council of Churches in Geneva has just completed a series of conferences on Christian social responsibility. The number of pastors and laymen taking part in these meetings was as follows: Sendai, 25; Okayama, 30; Osaka, 35-40; Atami (near Tokyo), 42. (See ACTIVITY NEWS, Number 122, April 15, 1958).

The main purpose of the conferences was to help Christian leaders to become better informed and more concerned about a number of crucial social issues. Population control, in particular, aroused a great deal of discussion. Everyone knows that the rate of population growth in this country has slowed dramatically in recent years. Some people were shocked to learn, however, that the increasing practice of abortion is largely responsible for this trend.

The delegates recognized that overpopulation faces not only Japan but vast areas of the world. Japan's problem must be considered in the context of the whole world's need. Everyone agreed that a partial solution for Japan might be sought in terms of emigration. But the Christian leaders could not come to an agreement as to the advisability of birth control. The majority of the participants seemed to be in favor of the dissemination of birth control information. Others, however, were resolutely opposed to this, and the question was left open. Dr. G. Sakakibara, an economist of Aoyama Gakuin University, made the initial presentation to the group on Japan's problem of overpopulation.







Another issue dealt with was the problem of poverty, presented by Dr. E. Isomura, a sociologist from Tokyo Municipal University. Dr. Isomura noted that in the areas which he has investigated there is very little contact as yet between the Christian Church on the one hand, and persons who are desperately poor.

Dr. Y. Iizaka of the Peers' School discussed the question of land ownership. Admittedly, the situation was greatly improved by the land reform carried out by the allied occupation authorities a number of years ago. According to Dr. Iizaka, however, existing structures of governmental control continue to favor the well-to-do farmer as over against the poor farmer. The professor pointed out that Japan still has a long way to go not only in terms of production, but also in terms of a more equitable distribution of available resources.

Dr. K. Watanabe, of Tokyo, opened up the subject of small industries in Japan. We face a situation where a vast number of small factories are exploited, through a system of sub-contracts, by a very small number of large industrial combines. If the suggested minimum wage of Yen 8,000 (\$22.40) per man per month were to be enforced, many small companies would immediately face bankruptcy.

#### CHRISTIAN SCHOOLMEN MEET

The Educational Association of Christian Schools in Japan held its 46th annual meeting at Hokuriku Gakuin, Kanazawa, on May 28-30. Dr. Yoshimune Abe, the veteran churchman and educator who is the Association's General Secretary, reported that 76 member schools were represented by about 140 delegates.

Hokuriku Gakuin is the only Christian school on the north-western coast of Honshu island, and draws students from a wide area. One reason for holding this year's conference at Hokuriku, Dr. Abe explained, was to help publicize the school throughout that remote coastal area.

Schoolmen from across the nation meeting at Kanazawa decided

--to publish a new series of seven text books for required Bible courses at the junior and senior high school level. These materials are to be ready by next April, when the new school year begins.

--to release a 500-page book which will give the history and present situation of Christian schools throughout Japan. This book is timed to coincide with the Protestant Centennial Celebration of Christian work in this country.







--to hold four regional conferences during the coming year for new teachers hired by the Christian schools. Of necessity, many of these teachers will not be Christian church members. It is felt that they should have some special orientation as to the unique role and mission of the Christian schools which they serve.

#### MISSIONARIES HEAR HEIMANN

About thirty missionaries met with Dr. Eduard Heimann of New York City at the Ambassador Hotel in Tokyo on Saturday evening and Sunday, May 31-June 1. Dr. Heimann is currently lecturing in Japan under the auspices of Tokyo Union Theological Seminary and the Social Problems Committee of the United Church of Christ. (See ACTIVITY NEWS, Number 122, April 15, 1958).

Dr. Heimann, who comes from the New School for Social Research in New York, gave two lectures: "Christianity and Changing Social Ideologies", and "The Christian Foundation of the Social Sciences". Against a historic background, he gave a Christian critique both of capitalism and of the communism that stems from Marx. He showed that beyond both of these rationalist ideologies there are possibilities for socio-economic progress which, under God, the thoughtful Christian is bound to pursue.

Dr. Heimann explained the principle of social reform, which can be Christian when it recognizes that man does not know or control all things, and that human solutions are subject to error and to correction. Over against determinism he set the Christian view of history as the scene of God's purposeful activity. He emphasized that in history there is an element of "creativity", which means that at different levels there is always the possibility of a new birth. He quoted with telling effect the prayer of Lincoln, "that this nation under God may have a new birth in freedom."

#### AVACO PLANS AHEAD

May 22-3 forty members of the board, committees and staff of the NCC's Audio Visual Activities Commission (AVACO) met near picturesque Enoshima island for AVACO's annual planning retreat.

AVACO's program in radio, projected AV aids, non-projected aids, tape library, leadership training program, relationship to coming world conferences in Japan, and projected plans for evangelism through television, were discussed and concrete plans laid for the coming year.







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During the coming year in the field of radio concentration will be put on two programs, "Song of the Heart", hymn program featuring the AVACO Chorus, and "Women's Talk", a fifteen minute talk for housewives by Mrs. Hanako Muraoka. "Songs of the Heart", sponsored in Tokyo and aired free by stations in Kobe and Shizuoka, is to be continued and followup carried out in Kobe and Shizuoka as it is in Tokyo, but through buying the spot announcement following the program rather than the air time itself. A similar type of followup is to be tried with "Women's Talk", inviting listeners to write in for copies of the talk or for a booklet.

Mathew Ogawa, Executive Director of AVACO, reported that one hundred ten new TV stations are being built in the next two years, and these stations are hungry for films. AVACO is ordering immediately a wide variety of films cleared for TV use and will be providing them with Japanese sound for broadcast free over these stations.

In the field of film evangelism it was decided to put much more emphasis on film tours with "film packages" especially tailored for evangelistic effect, and with sound in Japanese on magnetripe. The magnetripe attachment for adapting projectors to playback magnetripe sound tracks, now being produced by AVACO, was demonstrated.

More and better filmstrips, kamishibai, flannelgraph and picture stories, with evangelistic power and appropriate to Japan, were also requested. A greater emphasis will be put on such production in the coming year.

It was also agreed that AVACO radio and music tapes will be advertized and made available cheaply to those carrying on evangelistic work in hospitals, prisons and for the blind. "Women's Talk" will be used widely in meetings of church women's groups as a basis for discussion.



